

# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

*if you or a loved one are prescribed opioids.*



Prescription opioids have a number of serious side effects and risks, so it is important for you to ask questions, learn more about opioids, and understand their risks.

**Talking openly with your healthcare provider will help make sure you're getting care that is safe, effective, and right for you.**

1

## IS THIS MEDICATION RIGHT FOR ME ?

*Will this interact with other medications?  
What if I have a personal or family history of dependence?  
Do I have any risk of overdose?*

Tell your doctor about your medical history and all medications and supplements.

Share if you or anyone in your family has a history of substance misuse or dependence on drugs or alcohol.



**Discuss all of the risks and benefits of taking prescription opioids.**

## IS THIS THE RIGHT DOSE FOR ME?

2

*Can you clarify when I should take this medication?*



Opioids should only be used when necessary and only for as long as necessary.

**If you're prescribed an opioid, the best approach is to try the lowest dose with a limited quantity.**

3

## ARE THERE ANY ALTERNATIVES?

Providers should focus on functional goals and improvement, while engaging patients actively in their pain management.

**Patients with pain should receive the safest treatment that provides the greatest benefit.**



# HOW OFTEN WILL I NEED TO TAKE THIS MEDICATION? 4

Never take opioids in greater amounts or more often than prescribed.

With prolonged use, there are increased risks of developing dependence and having withdrawal symptoms.



**Opioids should be used only when necessary and only for as long as necessary.**

# 5 HOW SHOULD I STORE AND DISPOSE OF MEDICATIONS?

*How should I store meds safely?  
What should I do with unused medications?*



Keep medications out of sight and in a safe and secure place, such as a lock box.

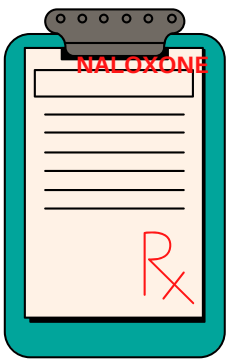
Keep prescription medications in the original bottle with the label attached, and with the child-resistant cap secured.

**Dispose of unwanted, unused and expired medications properly using a drug deactivation pouch or at a drug take-back location.**

# MAY I HAVE A PRESCRIPTION FOR NALOXONE? 6

Naloxone is a medication that can save a person’s life when administered during an opioid overdose.

**Talk to your friends and family about how to recognize and respond to an overdose, including the use of naloxone in the case of an accidental or purposeful overdose.**



# 5 WHEN SHOULD I FOLLOW UP?



If you have chronic pain and are prescribed opioids as part of your treatment, your doctor should monitor you regularly. This might include extra assessments, a pain treatment plan, more frequent office visits, or testing.

**Schedule a follow-up appointment with your doctor to re-evaluate your pain.**

Credit: CDC 'Opioid Basics'